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CAXTON MEMORIAL;

EXTRACTS FROM

THE CHURCHWARDEN'S ACCOUNTS

OF THE PARISH OF

ST. MARGARET, WESTMINSTER,

ILLUSTRATING

THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

WILLIAM CAXTON,

The First English Printer,

1478–1492.

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A CAXTON MEMORIAL.

THE recent Printers' Exhibition at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, following the Caxton celebration held at South Kensington three years ago, has given to all those who were able to be present pretty good evidence of the progress made in the mystery of the art of printing during the past four hundred years.

At the present time there are very few persons indeed who have given their attention to any extent in the reading of current literature who have not heard of William Caxton, the first English printer; but, at the same time, we venture to believe that there are a great many individuals who, while knowing the name of the Westminster printer, are nevertheless totally ignorant of the history of the times in which he lived, and, what is more, know nothing of the hardships he had to encounter in his professional capacity,—of his remarkable perseverance and industry, which, by a very small beginning, has produced that great power, the printing-press, to which, and to those who have laboured at it, from William Caxton's time to our own, the readers of this journal, and of every other printed sheet of paper, are so greatly indebted.

The late Mr. Charles Knight, a very worthy disciple of Caxton, very truly remarked, some forty years ago, "The object of the general diffusion of knowledge is not to render men discontented with their lot,—to make the peasant yearn to become an artisan, or the artisan dream of the honours and riches of a profession,—but to give the means of content to those who, for the most part, must necessarily remain in that station which requires great self-denial and great endurance, but which is capable of becoming not only a condition of comfort, but of enjoyment, through the exercise of these very virtues, in connexion with a desire for that improvement

of the understanding which, to a large extent, is independent of rank and riches." Next, therefore, to the sustentation of the body, must naturally come the improvement of the mind,—and in working to this end, Caxton and his descendants have earned,—nobly earned,—the lasting gratitude of mankind at large.

It is not our intention to detail the life of Caxton, but only to give a few facts in connexion with his career, as a preface to our present article, which we have thought best to entitle a Caxton Memorial. The subject-matter is derived from the very interesting churchwardens' books of St. Margaret's parish, Westminster,—in which parish Caxton worked at his press and died,—and which books contain a remarkable account, in their various entries, of the remarkable times in which our printer lived. For these extracts we are indebted to Mr. T. C. Noble, who, through the great kindness and courtesy of the rector, the Rev. Canon Farrar, and the churchwardens, Messrs. Helder & Hockridge, has been permitted to have free access to and to carefully examine these very interesting records.

It was about the year 1422, and in the Weald of Kent, that William Caxton is supposed to have been born, and in 1437-8 an entry in the books of the Mercers' Company of the City of London informs us that he and John Large paid four shillings as a fee upon being bound apprentices to Robert Large, who was an alderman of the City, and resided in the Old Jewry. But at the end of three years Alderman Large died, and the young 'prentice lad was "turned over" to a new master. We next hear of him at Bruges, engaged in the wool-trade, in which the mercers dealt largely, and in 1462 he is named as "Governor of the English Nation abroad," and copies of several letters to him, in that capacity,—one dated as late as June 3, 1467,—are still preserved in the Mercers' books.

In 1468 was solemnised the marriage of the Princess Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV., and Charles, Duke of Burgundy, and it was then, probably, that William Caxton first came under the notice of the duke, to whom, with two other mercers, he was a trade ambassador in 1469. It was in this year, too, we first find him appearing in print as a literary man,

commencing, as he tells us, a translation of Lefevre's "Recuyell of the Histories of Troye," which, under the patronage of, and as a servant to the Duchess of Burgundy, he completed in September, 1471. It would appear he made several MS. copies of this work, which, pleasing the nobility, brought him so many orders that he began to think what was the best way of supplying the demand. It was a very simple circumstance, it is true, but to it the world at large is indebted for the introduction of the art of printing into England, and the work was the first book printed in the English language. The Duke of Devonshire's copy, with the autograph of Elizabeth Grey, the Queen of Edward IV., was purchased at the celebrated Roxburghe sale, in 1812, for one thousand guineas, and this book, it may be remembered, was exhibited in a glass case on a velvet cushion at the Caxton celebration. It was probably printed at Bruges in 1474, and in it Caxton explains its history in these words:—"And for as moche as in the wrytyng of the same my Penne is worn, myn hande wery & not stedfast myn eyen dimed with overmoche lokyng on the whit paper, and my corage not so prone and redy to laboure as hit hath been, and that age crepeth on me dayly and feebleth all the bodye, and also be cause I have promysid to dyuerce gentil men and to my frendes to addresse to hem as hastely as I myght this sayd book, Therfor I have practysed & lerned at my grete charge and dispense to ordeyne this said book in Prynte after the maner & forme as ye may here see and is not wreton with penne and ynke as other bokes ben."

It was in 1475 or 1476 that William Caxton (and Colard Mansion, who assisted him in these early prints) issued a translation of Cessolis's "Game and Playe of the Chesse," and the same year, or early in 1477, he must have left Bruges for England. It was a momentous time for this country, and readers of this journal will readily understand why, when they are told that within a few months after, the first book printed in England with a date was issued from the precincts of the Abbey of Westminster.

Mr. Blades, in his interesting and very valuable "Life of Caxton," tells us that "his arrangements for settling in England, the

engagement of assistants, with all the other matters inseparable from a novel undertaking, must have occupied a considerable portion of time. If, therefore, we assume that about the latter end of 1476 Caxton commenced his new career in this country, we cannot be far wrong." One thing, however, is certain, and that is, we find the imprint to "The Dictes and Notable Wise Sayings of the Philosophers,"—"Emprynted by me, Wylliam Caxton, at Westmestre, 1477," and this would appear to have been issued, or, as he tells us in the book itself,—"fynisshed the xviij. day of the moneth of Novembre,"—thus clearly establishing a precise date for the commencement of printing in England.

From 1477 to the year 1485 we have numerous works from his press, and it is noticeable how curiously his colophons vary. Thus, in the "Chronicles of England," issued just 400 years ago,—in 1480,—we first read of the press as "In thabbey of Westmynstre by London"; in 1483 as "at Westmestre," as well as "in thabbey of Westmynstre"; in 1484 "in Westmynstre besyde London"; and in 1485 "in thabbey Westmestre,"—all leading us to suppose he was carrying on two printing-offices. Then, again, we have a handbill, which Earl Spencer has a copy of, 5 in. by 7 in. in size, desiring his customers to come "to Westmonester in to the Almonesrye at the reed pale," which was probably issued about 1478 or 1480, all which addresses, Mr. Blades concludes, meant but one place; that "thabbey" was really the precincts; that in the precincts was the Almonry, where alms were given to the poor, and Lady Margaret, the mother of Henry VII., erected almshouses; that this Almonry existed, not on the site of Henry VII.'s Chapel, as has been so often asserted, but was "west southwest of the Abbey towers"; and, finally, that the old house, which has been so often pictured as the building where Caxton did his printing, and from the timber of which, when it was pulled down in 1846, were made countless walking-sticks and snuff-boxes, was in reality a house erected long after Caxton's time,—so recent as the reign of Charles II.!

Therefore at the sign of the Red Pale,—and this was not a red pole or a red paling, as often asserted, but a shield in heraldry so called,—

Caxton worked, lived, and died. During the years 1477-1490 he was a notable man in his parish, as may readily be supposed. He attended the audit of the churchwardens' accounts, we know (by those existing having his name inserted by the scribe), in 1480, 1482, and 1484. He was a member of the Guild of our Blessed Lady Assumption, held in the church; and in 1491, close upon seventy years of age, he passed away in the very midst of the work he loved so well, for Wynken de Worde's colophon to the "Vitas Patrum" tells us it was "translated oute of Frenche into Englisshe by William Caxton, of Westmynstre, late deed, and fynysshed at the laste day of hys lyff." This was bringing matters to a pretty close ending even at that early date; and although we do not know the exact time of his death, yet, fortunately for us, there are the accounts containing his burial still in existence, very religiously preserved, as may be supposed, in the parish in which he died,—St. Margaret's, Westminster. Towards the end of the churchwardens' account for the years 1490-1492, some time towards the close of the year 1491, we find the entry of his funeral, costing 6s. 8d. for the four torches used on the occasion, and 6d. for ringing the knell from the bell in the church tower, payments which seem not very excessive for burying a great man, but, according to the other entries, very much higher than the majority of funerals then cost.

Again, we have it printed in "Scala Perfectionis," in 1493, that the book was finished "in William Caxston's hous," while in Lyndewode's "Constitutiones," in 1496, we find the source of its printing to have been "Apud Westmonasterium in domo Caxston," thus showing that the good work still continued at the old press. Of this William Lyndewode, it may be remembered, some curious particulars were given by the Society of Antiquaries in 1852, when his body was discovered in St. Stephen's Chapel that year ("Archæologia," vol. xxxiv. pp. 406-430). He was formerly rector of All Saints, Bread-street, in the City of London, and died bishop of St. David's, in 1446, and at the opening of his coffin in 1852, the late George Cruikshank made an etching of his head, which is very rare, if not unique, and which is now in the collection of Mr. Noble.

Although we should have supposed that William Caxton made a will, yet after a lengthy search no trace of one could be found by Mr. Blades. He surmises that our printer had nothing to leave beyond his stock-in-trade; and if this surmise is correct, then the possibility occurs of his having arranged before his death who should succeed to his estate. There are entries in the churchwardens' accounts of the "bequest of William Caxton" of a number of his "Golden Legend,"—probably the second edition of the book which was printed; and we find the parish was paid for sixteen copies between the years 1496 and 1504. Unfortunately, the accounts for 1492–1494,—the two years following Caxton's death,—are missing; but in the receipts for 1494–1496, nothing is mentioned. In the first year's account for 1496-8 we find three copies sold for 6s. 8d. each, "of thee printed boks that were bequothen to the church behove by William Caxston"; in 1498–1500 there were disposed of ten copies, viz., one each at 5s., 5s. 6d., 5s. 10d., and 5s. 11d., four at 5s. 8d., and two for 10s. 4d.; in 1500–2, two copies realised 5s. each; and the last copy, which was sold in the first year of 1502–4 brought in 5s. 8d.,—sum total of the sixteen copies, 4*l.* 10s. 11d. Of course, the value of money four centuries ago was very different to what it is now: the entries which we shall quote hereafter will prove that; but as an illustration of the value of the "Golden Legend" in our day, we may remark that in 1812 the Duke of Roxburghe's copy sold for 31*l.*, and J. D. Gardner's copy in 1854 brought in 230*l.*, and became the property of the Duke d'Aumale; and that no perfect copy of the book is known.

Of those gentlemen to whom the churchwardens sold their copies, William Ryoll purchased two, "the parisshe prest" one. Single copies were sold to four others,—one to "Elys bokebynder," seven to William Geisse or Geyse, and one (in the first year 1498—1500) was "solde in Westmynster Halle" for 5s. 8d., establishing, as we presume, the fact of there having been booksellers in the hall at this early period; while at the same time in that year there is actually an entry, "Rewarded to John Roff for the selling of a legende" 1d.,—not a ruinous commission, one will certainly exclaim.

In 1820 the Roxburghe Club desired to raise a monument to Caxton in Westminster Abbey, and the reader will suppose that was a very easy matter. Nothing of the kind. It was as difficult sixty years ago to get a monument *into* that sanctuary for the record of the deeds of a *great* man as it has been *sixty* years later to keep one *out* of it,—the only difference being, one was to the memory of a simple printer, yet to whom the world is so greatly indebted, and the other was to a young prince to whom the world owed nothing. However, the Westminster Abbey authorities prevented Caxton's tablet to be erected within the Abbey in 1820; but the authorities of St. Margaret's Church gladly accepted the trust; and there it rests to this day.

The next thing noticeable is the total absence of any reliable item referring to the family of our printer. It is true that in the first year's accounts for 1478-1480 we find "Item the day of burying of William Caxton" for two torches and four tapers "at a lowe masse," twenty pence, and this William Dibdin assumes to have been our printer's father. In 1464, at the burying of "Oliver Cawston," 8d. was received for four tapers; in the first year of the Guild accounts (1475-1478) a "John Caxston" paid 6s. 8d. upon admission as a brother; in the first year (1490-1492) there was received "atte bureyng of Mawde Caxston" 3s 2d. "for torches and tapres," and in the second year (1494-1496) "atte burying of Richard Caxton," 2d. These, with the entry relating to the printer himself, are all that can be found relating to the name in any of the accounts preserved between the years 1460 and 1510; but whether either of them was a relative to "our" William Caxton it is impossible for us to say.

Having thus given a few details relating to the man himself, we now propose illustrating the times in which he lived among us at Westminster, by aid of the parish accounts between the years 1477 and 1492, for the preservation of which the authorities of St. Margaret's are to be commended, seeing that that parish passed through, and was most closely associated with the men of, a former age who in troubled times were little respecters of

ancient records, ancient customs, or even persons themselves.

In giving in print for the first time many curious items from these interesting books, which Mr. Noble has very carefully extracted, we would but remark that the reader must judge for himself of the relative value of money of four centuries ago and now, for no reliable valuation can be given. It must be presumed that from ten to twenty times would probably be the limit, according to the article or circumstance of the case. Sir N. H. Nicolas, who in 1830 edited the wardrobe accounts of Edward IV. and the privy purse expenses of Elizabeth of York, gives some equally curious items to those we now give. For the support of the queen's two nephews and niece, two female servants, and a groom, 13s. 4d. a week was allowed! The board wages of the "Fool,"—by no means a fool,—was 2s. a month. A surgeon's fee for going from London to Richmond to visit the queen was 13s. 4d., while workmen's wages were at the rate of 6d. a day! A pair of shoes for the fool cost 6d., and a pair for the queen 1s. Beer cost 2s. 8d. a barrel, while two shirts cost 1s. 5d.; and sixteen rowers for conveying her majesty in a barge from Baynard's Castle to Westminster in 1502 had 4d. each, and the master 1s. 4d. These prefatory notes will give the reader some idea of the interesting contents of the Westminster parochial accounts, which we now intend to quote.

1478–1480.

This account is from the 7th of May, 1478, to the 18th of May, 1480 (John Wycam and Nicholas Wollestroft being churchwardens), and consists of forty-five written quarto parchment pages. The first year's receipts amounted to 33*l.* 16s. 4d., and the second year's to 34*l.* 13s. 2¾d.,—and a farthing at that date was an important item. The payments for the two years came to 21*l.* 12s. 6d. and 23*l.* 6s. 7d., leaving a balance at the end of the account of 23*l.* 10s. 5¾d. in favour of the churchwardens for 1480–82. And although all the items appear very trifling, they were not so at that date. William Caxton was one of the parishioners present at the audit.

The general account of receipts chiefly consisted of payments made for torches and tapers

used at the burial of the inhabitants; but at the end of the accounts there were seventeen items owing, the whole of which was but 3*l.* 12s. 4d. They would thus appear to have given credit for such matters at that day; for "William Sampson Brewer in Totehilstrete oweth for the buriall of his child, for 4 tapers, 8d." [In all cases we shall use modern figures in specifying amounts.] Then, again, we find "the wife of Nicholas Wollestroft oweth for his burying 10s.," and "for 4 tapers at the moneths mynde of the same Nicholas, 12d." In the first year's receipts we find there was received "the day of burying of William Trollop for 2 tapers," 2d. May we be permitted to ask what relation was this William Trollop of 1479 to the celebrated builder of the same name in the same parish 400 years afterwards? "The brynging in of 2 straunge torches in the chirche at crystynyng of a child" was 8d., and "for 4 tapers w^t^ our lady candilstykkys," 3s. 4d.; but what the occasion was at which they were used is not specified.

The burials of individuals ranged from 2d. paid for two tapers, "at the burying of Elizabeth Dennam," to the extravagant sum of 17s. 2d. paid "the day of burying of John Wytteney for 4 torches and 4 tapers, and the pytte and the belle," consequently, Westminster that day was witness to "a grand funeral." "The yeres mynde of Sir Thomas Grey for 4 tapers," cost 12d.; and this year's mind was the religious ceremony in the church, held on the anniversary of the knight's death, when his soul, his wife's soul, his mother's and father's souls, and all Christian souls, were probably prayed for. For "burying of a child from Saynt Albons" 2d. was received; and if this meant St. Albans, Herts, the child was brought (for those times) a very long way. In all these accounts the vast majority of funeral payments were 2d., and sometimes the entries were very vague about names; for instance, "one Crystopher of Knyghtbrigge," and "a brewer's wife fro. Charyng Crosse," the latter costing for four tapers 8d. The burial of "John Shordyche" cost 2d., while that of "Sir Alexander" was 4d.; but the most interesting entry of this year's account is "Item, the day of burying of William Caxton for 2 torches and 4 tapers at a lowe masse," 20d.;

and this is supposed to have been the father of our printer.

In the second year, the "burying of Robert of the Covent [Convent] Kychen for 2 tapers, 2d.," and the same for "Isabell Braye,"—and at this early date the Bray family was a noted one in the parish. When a parishioner was above the ordinary folk, and could afford burial in the church, he was favoured with a "pytt," as the grave was called, for 6s. 8d., and as a rule his "knyll with the belle" was rung, which cost 6d., as was the case with one Richard Cowper. "A Mayde of the Swan,"—a noted tavern in the parish,—was buried this year, and there was paid "for 2 tapers 2d." as usual.

Another source of receipts was "The Comon Gadering,"—being collections made on feast days and holidays: Pentecost, St. Margaret, All-Hallows', Nativity, Good Friday, and Easter Day, the latter being the grand day. The two years' receipts amounted to 19*l.* 7s. 11$\frac{3}{4}$d., of which nearly a half was collected at Easter.

Pew-rents were then in existence, of which there are twenty entries the first year, and forty-three the second. According to position in the church, so they appear to have been charged, some being 12d. and some as high as 3s. 4d. Thus "William Cowper for a pewe for his wife" paid a shilling, and "John Breght for his pewe" 3s. One entry reads, "Thomas Bough for an ouyr alm̄y under the foot of o^{r} lady of Pyte to kepe brede, wyne, and wexe for straung̃e to syng w^{t}, 12d."

Under the heading of "Bequests" we find one giving 20d. and another 20s. Others gave various articles (as Caxton did in 1491,—copies of his book). Thus we find "the guyfte of John Wardrop a playne towell conteyning 3 yerdys," while the wife of John Taillour gave another towell of diaper eight yards in length.

The "Dyvers Payments" which were made during the same period are interesting. In the first year "to 4 men to bere 4 torchis on Corpus Xpi day, 4d."; and "in Wyne to the Syngers the same day, 4d." Throughout these accounts we shall see many entries of payments for wine, ale, bread, and such "creature comforts." The two clerks and beadle received amongst them each quarter 5s. St. Margaret's-day was then a high festival in the parish. The first year we find

"to John Greve for a rewarde for the Clothe of Arras at Seynt Margrets day, 2s."; and "to a man *for a day* at the hangyng up of the saide Clothe and takyng downe, *and for brede and ale to them*, 6d." In the second year, "for brede, ale, and wyne into the rode-loft on Saynte Margrets day, 12d.," while these refreshments were preceded the night before by a more elaborate, if less costly, entertainment. "Paid in expenses at tavern on Saynte Margaret evyn upon the Syngers of the Abbay, 8d."

Here are a few entries that may interest our building friends:—

"For a new dore at the hedde of the steple and lok to the same dore, 2s. 1d. For a dore in the rode lofte to save and kepe the people fro the orgaynes, 12d. For half a hundred of 6d. nayles, 6d. For makyng of a new dore for a pewe, 8d. For makyng of a newe staire in to the rode lofte and the stuffe, 30s. For a pulpytte in the chirche-yerde agenst the prechyng of Doctour Penkey, 2s. 8d. To a carpynter for makyng of a rofe ovir the new steir and the tymbre that wente thereto, 2s. To a dauebour and his man for four dayes at the same staire, 4s. 4d. For a lode of lome, 4d. For 100 lathe, 6d. To Nicholas Plomer for a gotter over the newe staire, and 4 faggots to make fire, 5s. For makyng of a keye for the chist, 4d. For a lokk w^{t} 2 keyes, 20d. For 3 barrys in the wyndowe at the staire-hedd weying 12 lb. pce. the lb. 2d., = 2s. For a hope of yron for the holy-water tubbe, 4d. [The hooping of the holy-water tub was an annual charge.] For 6 holy-water sprynkyles, 6d. To a carpynter for makying of the crucyfix and the beme he standeth upon, 40s. For kervyng of Mary and John, and the makyng newe, 33s. 4d. For the gilding of the same Mary and John, the crosse, &c., 6*l*. 6s. 8d. For takyng down of a beme in the body of the Chirche afore the crucifix, and settyng up of a new cople arche wyse, and borde to sealyng thereof, and other stuff, 26s. 8d. For naylys, stapuls, bolts, and other iryn worke, 6s. 8d."

Among other items of payments we find 4d. was paid "for holme and ivy at Cristmas." "Cotyn candyll for the lantern for alle halowen tyde to Candylmas," cost 12d., and "the lamp bason" 8d. "For mending of glasse wynddowys aboute in the Chirche" cost 4s., and this also

appears to have been a frequent charge upon the account. "To Mathew Metynghm for playing at the Orgons when we had butt one clerk," 8d. "For brede and wyne on holy thursday when pcession was done," 8d. "For 4 torchys weying 83 lb. pce the lb. 4d." "For mendyng and makyng clene of the small organs" 12d.

"A Tyler and his man for a days werk upon Seint Margets ile" received 3s. 1d., while "the wyfe of the Balle for pavying tyles" was paid 3s. 4d. Two dozen candles at Christmas cost 2s., but they were probably of larger size than we burn at the present day.

Such are a few of the interesting items derived from the accounts of the parish the year following Caxton "opened shop" in it as a printer. We have said that the book itself is comprised of forty-five written parchment pages. The cost of the book as well as the writing of it is set down at the end in these words:—"To Paule Asshewell for wrytyng of the boke of Accompt, 6s. 8d. For Pchement to this boke, 14d.,"—both payments, it will be acknowledged, not being excessive.

1480-1482.

The next accounts which we find in the volume are stated to be from the 18th of May, 1480, to the 23rd May, 1482, William Garard and William Hatchet being churchwardens. Although there are only twenty-four written parchment pages, and of smaller size than the first-quoted accounts, being, in fact, 8 in. by 11 in. in size, yet the entries are written closer and more compact. The total receipts for the two years was 65*l.* 5s. 2¼d., and the payments 49*l.* 13s. 10½d., leaving a balance of 15*l.* 11s. 3¾d. When the book was made up there were but two burials owing for, one of which was "Richard Hunt, yeoman of the Crown," 10s.

In the first year's ordinary receipts we find, "the day of burying of a man that was slayne in Saynte Jamys felde, 2 tapers, 4d.," and "of a childe of knyght brigge, 2 tapers, 2d."; "of lewys Welyngton, for 2 tapers, 2d."; "for the knelle of Thomas w^t^ the grete belle, 6d."; and "for 4 tapers," 4d. At the burial "of Sir Thomas Cleyton, pste [priest], for 4 tapers," 20d.; for 2 torches, 2s., and "for licence of 4

torches of Seynt Anne," 4d.; at the "Crystenyng of Maistr Chamberlayn childe," 12d. was paid for 2 torches.

There are two interesting entries in the second year; one gives the value of old silver, the other refers to the rent of a house. The former reads: "Item the same wardeyns charge theymself w^t^ broken sylver, whiche was of the olde Crosse, weying 68½ unces, pce the unce, 3s. 6d. = 11*l.* 19s. 9d." The other entry tells us,—"the forsayde wardeyns chargith theymself of rent of the tent, called the sonne, payd by the handys of Robert Bromflete by all the tyme of this accompte, 7*l.*,"—that is, seventy shillings a year.

The collections on the "Gaderyng dayes" brought in during the two years 20*l.* 14s. 8½d.; while the pew-rents (9 the first year, and 47 the second) produced 4*l.* 8s. 8d. Of these, we find our scribe, "Paul Asshewell, for his wifes pewe," paid 16d., and we also learn he was himself a Public Notary.

The bequests in the two years only amounted to 13s. 8d., viz., two money gifts of 3s. 4d. each, and two gifts of a somewhat curious nature. One "of Baynbrigge, a pece of tymber," which was valued at 12d.; and the other, "of John Greve, a marble stone," valued at 6s. What the churchwardens did with this marble stone we are unable to say.

It was no uncommon thing for the church goods to be lent out in these times, for there is an entry of "a Rewarde of the Lord Berkeley for a vestment and a chaleys," 12d.

The payments are as varied as usual. A lantern cost 9d.; a lock with key for rood-loft, 6d.; "a fire panne," 6d.; "for makyng clene of the Chirche yerde," 20d.; mending a pew in the church, 2d.; mending the velvet above the sepulchre, 4d.; and the glass window in the rood-loft, 4s.; two red skins "for 2 stolys in the quere" cost 8d.; and 4 yards of green fringe, with nails and making, came to eleven pence more.

We can readily believe the condition of the churchyard at that date, and at certain periods of the year, when we read such entries as this continually occurring:—"For carrying awaye of dungge in the churcheyerde, 4d."

A chain to the church-door cost 3d.; a rope

for the little bell, 6d.; hanging of the bells cost 5s.; and "a balderyck to the grete bell, 6d."

St. Margaret's Eve this second year was attended by the singers of the King's Chapel, and the wine which was by them "drunkyn at Robert Whityngton" cost 2s.; and for the wine had for them the next day in the rood-loft, 16d. was paid; and "when even songe was done" at Thomas Burgesy's, 2s. 4d.

Of course, there were several "pits" opened in the church for the burial of the aristocrats of the parish, and for paving these over, John Faydar received 3s. 2d., and in this sum we presume stone was included. The special paving over of "Jone Witteney's pitt" cost 8d.

We have already given the extract relating to the breaking up of the old cross, and we now come to the entries relating to the purchase of the new one. "For the new crosse, weying vi^{xx}x [130] unces pce evry une v^{s} [5s.] sm.," 32*l.* 10s. Now for this elaborate piece of work it was necessary to clean up the staff, the painting of which cost 20d., while "for gyltyng and burnyshing of the upper parte of the crosse staffe and burnisshing of the fote of the crosse," cost 4s. more.

Mr. Ashwell received 6s. 8d. for writing the account, and 12d. was paid for the parchment.

1482–1484.

"Here folowith th accompt of William Burghm and Thomas Crane, wardeyns," &c., from 24th May, 1482, to 24th May, 1484. This is written in twenty-six folio pages by our old friend Ashwell, and William Caxton attended the audit. The two years' receipts amounted to 66*l.* 11s. 10¾d., and the payments, 47*l.* 11s. 5½d., leaving a balance on the right side of 19*l.* 0s. 5½d.

Among the general receipts we find, for 4 tapers, "at the yeres mynd of Richard Humfrey fader and moder," 12d.; "the day of burying of a poore woman w^{t} in grete Maude in totehil strete," 2d.; "at the burying of John Shordyche wyfe," for 4 tapers and two torches, 5s.; "a man at the vyne gardyne, 2 tapers," 4d.; "of Thomas, of the Convytte house, 2 tapers," 2d.; "of a preist oute of Chanon Aley, 4 tapers," 12d.; "for 2 torches for the same preist to brynge him to the chirche," 16d.; "of John Nicolas, yoman of the Crown, for 2 tapers," 4d.;

"of James Halywell, for 4 torches to brynge hym to chirche, 5s.; for 4 tapers, 20d."; "of Sir Willim Hopton, tresorer of the king's howse, for his pytte in the chirche, 6s. 8d.; for lycence of 24 torches and 4 tapers, he gave to the chirche 2 torches; for his knylle, 6d."; "the day of burying of longe Jone, for 2 tapers, 4d."

"The Comon Gaderyng day" receipts produced, in the two years, 20*l.* 4s. 9d., and the pew-rents (twelve items the first year and thirty-seven the second), 3*l.* 16s. 10d.!

"The bequests" only amounted to 18 yards of diaper, and from two donors, in the second year.

With regard to the payments, "three bondys of iron to the hatche at the chirche dore" cost 8d., and "for the amendyng of the glasse wyndow at the west end of the chirche" 9d. was paid. "For amendyng of the pulpet and the amendyng of the Holy watr stykkys, 3d." "For the pformyng of one pane to a glasse wyndowe in Saynte George's Chapell, 13d." A tiler and his man for a day and a half's labour received 1s. 6½d.; while two masons for four days in our lady chapel received 4s.

Bookbinders' charges could not have been very excessive, especially when we find, "for coveryng of a boke called a 'Legend,'"—a copy of the first edition of Caxton's celebrated work then just issued from his press,—only cost 20d., and yet "for byndyng and coveryng a masse boke" 3s. 4d. was paid. It must be borne in mind, however, that it was binding meant to stand the rough usage of ages, and not to fall to pieces almost as soon as the book was opened.

"Paide for silkes to the Abbay, 12d.," "for the amendyng of the clothis before Seynt Margaret and Seynt Katyn (Katherine), and for corde, 12d."; "for makyng of the purpell chesyble, 2s.," and "a yarde of bokeram, 4d.," are a few of the drapery entries.

"Makyng clene of the chirche yarde" cost 5d., and "a lode of gravell to lay at the chirche dore" cost 4d. By the entry, "glasyng of the clerke's chambre wyndow," 6d., we presume that gentleman lived within the precincts of the church itself, a supposition well founded, when we shall presently find a bedstead provided for the bed which a good lady had very benevolently given for his use.

Among the items we find the foot of the cross mended, at a cost of 10*s.* 10*d.*; a torch weighing 12 lb. cost 4*s.*; faggots cost 6*d.*; a new wheel to the little bell cost 5*s.* 4*d.*; "a new key to the cofyn that the taprs is in," 3*d.*; a ladder, 9*d.*; setting up the candles at Christmas, 4*d.*; to the smith, "for claspys to the lyttel belle," 8*d.*; mending of the church wall, 8*d.*; and last, but not least, "on Seynte Margret's day one galon wyne and a half," 15*d.*, and this was in addition to the usual "refreshers" then given to the singers and other officials at the festival. Throughout all these accounts we shall see the good old dignitaries of St. Margaret's parish never forgot "the inner man," no matter what the times were.

PARISH PAYMENTS IN EARLY DAYS.

HAVING given a few illustrations of the times in which Caxton commenced his celebrated work in Westminster, in the reign of Edward IV., we will now proceed to review the events which are chronicled in the St. Margaret's books during the remainder of our printer's life in the parish.

1484-1486.

"Here folowyth thaccompte of Thomas Gregory and Henry Swifte, Wardeyns of the parisshe churche of Sainte Margarets, of Westm^r, in the shire of Midd." From May 24, 1484, to May 11, 1486. This account comprises twenty-two written pages, on parchment, and while the two years' receipts amounted to 57*l.* odd, the payments were some 26*l.*, leaving a balance of 31*l.* 6*s.* 0¼*d.*

As we have already stated, the majority of items in the receipts are for funerals which cost, for ordinary parishioners from 2*d.*, which was the usual price for the two tapers used at the ceremony, to as much as 6*s.* 8*d.* for "the pitt" in the church, 6*d.* for "the knell" with the bell in the church tower, and certain payments according to the position of the deceased, for torches, or tapers, or lights, as we shall presently give evidence of. Thus, in the first year's receipts, at the burying of William King's wife we find the pit cost 6*s.* 8*d.*, the bell, 6*d.*, and the four torches 5*s.*, while at "the

burying of a prisoner," the lights cost only 1d.! Then, again, there is an entry of the burial "of the good man of the Katryn Whele" (Catherine Wheel), which for four tapers cost 16d., although we have not been favoured with the gentleman's name. A servant of the King's Chappel paid 6d., as did also "William's Childe, of the Popis hed" (Pope's Head). Among the second year's receipts, "the burying of William Spade," for four tapers cost 4d.; "John Barnard Gentilman," eight torches, 13s. 4d., and knell, 6d.; and "my lady Stoner," six torches, 10s. Two very important personages were also buried this year: the first was "Rauffe of the Pantry" in the Palace, four tapers, 8d.; the other was "Mr. John, the Quenes ffoole," but his burial only cost 4d. for two tapers.

We have already instanced the fact of the church goods having been lent out as occasion might require; but here is an interesting entry, perhaps in some way relating to the demise of the king:—"Item in a rewarde for Candlesticks lent into the Abbey for King Edward the 4th, 6d."

The festival of St. Margaret's is again quoted among the payments:—"Paid to the Kep[r] of the Kyng's place for clothis of Arras to hang aboute the Church on Sainte Margaret's day, 2s. To the Vesterer of the Abbay for clothis of sylke and of golde, 12d. For hangyng up and takyng downe of the saide clothis, 6d. For wasshyng of the ymage of Sainte Margarate, 1d. Unto 2 watchmen on Sainte Margaret's night," no doubt to protect the drapery, &c., lent by the king, "8d. For ffaggots for the bonefire, 4d." And, as usual, "for brede, ale, and wyne, for Singers of the Kyngs Chapell, 12½d."

In the early volumes of the *Builder* much interesting information will be found relating to churchyard crosses. That at St. Margaret's, Westminster, is now shown to have been in existence earlier than 400 years ago, for here are the items of its restoration:—"Paide for a grate brode ffrise stone to mend the fote of the crosse in the churche yerd, 3s. 4d. Paid for Assheler Stones for the same crosse, and for laying and werkmanship, 7s. 4d. Paid for makyng of a crosse of tre to set upon the said crosse of stone, and for the spere, sponge, and nailes of the same, 2s. 4d. Paide to John Rede

for peynting of the same crosse of tre, sponge, spere, and nailes, 3s."

In the second year's accounts we find some notes about the steeple cross, which also appears to have been a restoration. Thus the carpenter "for half a lode of tymber to make the crosse upon the steeple of the chirche" received 4s. 2d. Two carpenters for labour on it received 8s. 4d. The plumber for 32 lb. solder 16s., and for casting 711 lb. of new lead, 9s. 9d., and as "the new lede is more than the olde lede" (which he took in exchange) by 219 lb., he charged the churchwardens with the difference at the rate of 5s. 4d. the hundredweight. The same plumber received for his labour and for nails used 39s. 6d.; the smith received 2s. "for 2 doggis of yron for the stepill and the brodds to them," and 16d. was paid "for sawydyng."

Among the miscellaneous payments we find "for 4 barrys for the clerkys wyndowe, weynge 21 lb. price the lb. 1½d." "For a bushell of coolys [coals] for hallowyng of the ffonte, 2d." "For makyng of a new claper to Judas bell," 10d. "For mendynge of the bellowse of the organs in the rode lofte," 6d. "For brede and ale spent upon Crowe and other Clerks and the Children of the Kyngs Chapell at Crisstemasse," 6d.; while William Tull, "the tiler and his fellow," received 8d. a day each for three days' work.

1486–1489.

The accounts for these years are not those of the churchwardens proper, but of Thomas Burgeys, William Saynbrygge, and William Hungate, "late Maisters or Wardeyns of the fraternyte or gilde of oure blessid lady Saynt Marie withyn the parisshe church of Saynt Margarete," and are written in forty pages of parchment. They are a much more elaborate affair than the ordinary accounts, and give us a very interesting insight into "the origin and mystery" of a religious guild four hundred years ago. Thus we find the receipts with arrearages came to 365*l.* odd, and the payments to 269*l.* Of the balance "the said Maisters nowe accomptants have lent to the churchwardens of Seynt Margarets upon certen plegges of sylver," 60*l.*

The greater sum of the receipts came from

rents from houses left to the guild by benevolent members, which, for the three years, amounted to 134*l.* 9s. 4d. Here are the rentals:—Three houses in Tothill-street, for the three years, let for 19*l.*, of which one was let to Sir William Stoner at 66s. 8d. a year, "with reparations"; nine tenements in our Lady-alley (three years), 14*l.* 10s.; a tenement called the Swan in St. Mary's parish, in the Strand, with five others adjoining (three years), 13*l.*; the tenement and garden late in the tenure of Sir Thomas Norfolk, at Long Ditch (three years), 48s.; two tenements at Kensington, 40s.; while 40 acres of land, also at Kensington, were let as a field at 13s. 8d. a year! The house called the Sun in King-street, 4*l.* per annum; the Bell Tavern (which was a flourishing house 250 years afterwards), 40s. a year; while quit-rents were received of "the monastery of Westminster" of 13s. 4d. yearly for the tenement called the Saracen's Head by the Palace gate in King-street, and of a John Randolf, mercer, of London, 6s. a year "for a license of free entre of comyng yn and going out for his tenents thurgh the gate and aley called our lady aley in the Kyngs strete."

Bequests to the guild included 30s. in money, three torches, two candlesticks, "a ryng of golde w^t^ a saphure"; a tenement "next the Wulstapel gate," let at 20s. a year, and all the velvet for the new garland, except a quarter of a yard!

Under the heading of "foren receyts" there is an extraordinary item of 6s.: "the said late Maisters charge theym self wyth the ferme of a cowe longyng to the said fraternyte, letyn to ferme to Ch. Jakson at 2s. by yere"!

Next we have the entry of admittance of 114 persons into the fraternity, at the cost of 6s. 8d. each. Among these, Sir Richard Surlonde, sub-dean of the King's Chapel; Mr. Thomas Crapp's mother; Sir John Tyler Priest; the porter of the King's House; Andrew, the beer-brewer; the master keeper of my lord of York's place; and last, but not least, "*Wynkyn Worde*," who, without doubt, was the fellow-worker with Caxton in his printing-office, and his worthy successor in the art and mystery of printing. There were also eleven persons received into the fraternity after their death,—that is to say,

their names were entered upon the roll if they were kindly disposed in the shape of a legacy, as was the case with the Queen's chaplain, who left 20s. to the guild.

The payments naturally form a very interesting series of items. Quit-rents were paid to the amount of 115s. 6d. for the three years. Six priests received 33s. 4d. a quarter each, except one who, having "departed without licence," had two weeks' wages stopped. Four almspeople received 6s. 8d. a quarter each; the beadel, 13s. 4d. a year; while "expenses of quarter-daies" come at from 12d. to 20d., being payments "for brede, ale, and chese." The "Obytes," or religious services for the souls, &c., of the departed benefactors, amounted to 6*l.* 10s. 5d. for the three years. The "necessary expenses" included, for washing clothes, repairs, torch-bearers, scouring of basins, &c., 14s. 2d. Wax cost nearly 5*l.* Repairs to the houses amounted to 7*l.* 3s. 2d. Allowances for the thirty-one separate pennies offered at the obits, 2s. 7d.

The most interesting portion of the account is naturally the "costs of the generall feste," and it will very forcibly explain that the art and mystery of eating and drinking was a failing indulged in by even a religious guild in the good old times. This grand banquet was "kept and holden at the Archbishop of York's place in the third yere of this accompt," and cost no less than 37*l.* 7s. 3d., of which the brethren and sisters present paid 11*l.* 17s. 9d. We hope our readers, in casting an inquiring look at the little bill, will remember that "all things are changed" since those times, and calculations of the relative difference in prices must be made according to circumstances.

A pipe of red wine and a hogshead of claret, 105s. For making of the garlands, 5s. For six dozens of white cups, 2s. 8d. "For portage and bote-hire of the turbut, 4d." "To the pleyers for a pley, 7s." Red wine bought for jelly, 7¼ gallons, at 8d. Carriage of the wine "from London to Westminster," 2s. 8d. For twenty-two dozen bread, two dozen manchets, and four dozen trenchers, 26s. "To John Bright for a kilderkyn of ale, 2s. Four barrels of ale at Chelsea, 16s.; and a barrel bought at Holborn, 4s. Thirty-two pike fish cost 14d. each; nine turbots cost 15s. 2d. the lot. Poultry, too, was

cheap, for five dozen and eight capons cost 6s. a dozen; seven dozen chickens 15d. the dozen; three dozen geese at 6s. 8d. the dozen (!); six herons 16d. each; eleven dozen conies 2s. the dozen; eight swans at 3s. 4d. each (!); and 300 eggs 2s.—that is to say 8d. a hundred! We next come to the butcher's bill. Shoulders of veal cost 3d. each; ten legs of mutton 20d.—that is 2d. a leg; two sheep 3s. 4d., (!) or, to use the words of the account, "an hole shepe 20d."; nine pair of calves' feet, 9d.; two pieces of beef, 12d. Fifty-two gallons of milk "for furments," 3s. 4d. Bucks cost 6s. 8d.; but several rewards of from 12d. to 5s. were given to the servants of donors of some of these dainties. The miscellaneous items included a pint of mustard, ½d.; three gallons of honey, 3s. 8d.; 10 lb. of candle, 10d.; breakage and loss of thirty-five pots and pans, 1s. 6½d.; half a bushel of grapes, 6d.; herbs, 8d.; half a pound of cynamon, 12d.; 2 lb. of pepper, 2s. 11d.; ½ gallon of vinegar, 6d.; 18 lb. of raisins at 2½d.; 6 lb. of almonds at 3d.; and 1 lb. of cloves, 3s. Carriage of the tables cost 6d.; labourers "watching" two nights, 2s. 7d.; the cook for dressing the dinner received 26s. 8d. The butler and his men, 13s. 4d.; the plate-keeper, 6s. 8d.; hire of the vessels cost 11s. 6d.; and last, but not least, there was paid as a gift "to the keeper of my lord of Yorks place" 6s. 8d., to the under keeper 20d., and to the beadle 12d., no doubt in acknowledgment for the kind permission to hold the banquet there.

Such are a few of the items from this feast account, and they will convey, we think, a very good idea of the cost of provisions at that period. Returning to the churchwardens' books proper, we find the next two accounts are of more than usual interest, for they are the last of those in the years in which Caxton lived and worked amongst us, in the famous city of Westminster.

1488-1490.

"Here folowyth thaccompte of John Gerard and of Heugh Okham Wardeins," &c. from May 28, 1488, to May 27, 1490, written on twenty pages of parchment, 8 in. by 12 in. in size. The two years' receipts amounted to 48*l.* odd, but the payments only came to 15*l.* 11s. 6d., leaving a balance of some 32*l.*, 20*l.* of which, we are

told by the audit, was delivered over "to the Maisters of the chirch werks."

This account gives, as usual, an intimation that a portion of the church goods was lent out to another parish, for we find 20d. was received "for lendyng of the best cowpes to Saynt Clements w^t^out temple barr at Wytsontyd," and 8d. "of my lord grey for lendynge of a Masboke vestment and chales." In the second year a "Thomas Chyppyngdale" was buried at the cost of 2d.; while the funeral of the parson of Arundel (Sussex?) cost 6s. 8d. for torches, and 6s. 8d. for his pit in the church.

The bequests the second year comprised two only,—Lord Gray, for the loan to him, upon three occasions, of a vestment, chalice, and mass-book, gave 2s. 8d.; and 100s. was received from Lady Ancras.

The payments included a rope for the middle bell, 7d.; "to John Benet and John Tadgoce, for theyr gret age at Mydsomer," 3s. 4d.; making the base of the cross of stone in the churchyard, 4s.; "for leynthyng of evry raftre of the olde rofe, and retornyng of the same downe agayne to the rofe of ye new ile," 3s. 4d.; for 1,000 tiles, 5s.; for tile-pins, 2½d.; a labourer 4 days, 16d.; and last, but not least, "payde for brede, ale, & wyne, and kychen for a sowpar to the awdytors and to the new wardeyns," 20s.

1490-1492.

The accounts of these years,—Richard Frost and Robard Lowthyam being wardens,—have a melancholy interest, for they contain the relation of the burial of William Caxton. There are twenty-seven written parchment pages, and they embrace the periods May 27, 1490, to June 3, 1492, in which periods the receipts were 60*l.* 1s. 9¾d., and the payments 56*l.* 1s. 9d., leaving a balance of only 4*l.* 0s. 0¾d. on the right side.

As this account is of more than ordinary interest, Mr. Noble has gone somewhat minutely into details, and the result of his scrutiny we cannot do better than give. Of the general receipts, the first year there are 344 entries, and the majority of these are burials. As we have already instanced, the smallest payment is 2d., and the numbers buried at this rate were 138. The highest payment was for the pit and torches

of a "Mayster-Bostok," 14s. 8d. There were two burials at 5s.; three at 20d.; 26 at 8d.; 89 at 4d.; and 19 at 12d. Two cost 4s., one 7s. 4d., and five 6s. 4d.; so it will be seen that the parish at that date contained many persons above the average class. It is in this first year we find "Mawde Caxston" buried, costing for torches and tapers, 3s. 2d.; but what relation she was to the printer Mr. Blades has not been able to discover. The second year's items for burials, &c., amount to 256, and of these exactly 100 are for 2d.; 23 for 6d. (tolling the bell); 59 for 4d.; 9 for 8d.; and 16 for 1s. The highest payment this year was for "Annes Clark," whose funeral, for pit, torches, and tapers, cost 13s. 4d. But the most interesting entry is that which stands the 190th out of the 256, and which reads in these words:—"*Itm atte bureyng of William Caxton, for* iiij *torches,* vj^{s} viij^{d}. *Itm for the bell atte same bureyng,* vj^{d}." The relative position of the entry would lead us to suppose (says Mr. Blades) that our first English printer was buried towards the close of the year 1491, and we do not think he is far out, if we take into consideration all the other facts attending the close of his career. It must be borne in mind the earliest parish register in this country is of date 1538 (which is the date that at St. Margaret's commences), so in having these churchwardens' books preserved to us we have priceless treasures extending back half a century before official registration, and in this instance far above valuation, for they contain the entry of the burial of William Caxton.

Among the other items of receipts of the first year stand the bequests, 20d. from "Syr John Batyll Prest"; 10d., which was "gadered atte weddyng of Howell's mayde"; and 2s. 8d., which two persons philanthropically gave "for dyvers peces of olde tymber." In the second year, "Bartylmew the lay monke" gave 8d. "for two old bordes"; "Syr Richard Sugar Prest" left the church 10s.; while there was "receyved of the churchwardens of Seynt Pulchres for the dragon," 2s. 4d. This latter entry, which at first reads unintelligible, is further explained by a payment in the same year, "for dressyng of the dragon, and for packthread," 4d.,—this dragon being, without

doubt, a painted representation of that winged serpent who, it may be remembered, according to tradition, took upon himself to swallow St. Margaret, but who in turn was too strong for the stomach of even so great and powerful an enemy, for she managed to effect her escape, and by so miraculous a delivery became the patron saint of all unborn infants! Consequently, as we have already stated, St. Margaret's Day (July 20th) was anciently a grand festival in Westminster, hence in this second year,—the same year that Caxton died in,—we find payments of 4d. "for fagotts for the bondfire on Saynt Margarett's Even," and 12d. "for payntyng of the wall byhinde Saynt Kateryn, and for ffreshyng of Saynt Margarett," besides those other refreshing entries, when bread, ale, and wine, no doubt, kept alive the festivities of the hour.

There is an entry among the receipts of a diaper towel $4\frac{1}{4}$ yards long, by half a yard wide, which Margaret Eden was good enough to present to the church, with the substantial addition of 2s. 8d. in money. Such a notable bequest had to be recognised by the parish, and so we find among the payments, "Payde for brede and ale spent upon Margaret Eden and her feleshipp atte Rceyuyng of a towell afore wrytton, 2d."! The parish had only just spent three-halfpence "for brede and ale atte makyng of the inventory of the chirche goodes."

Some extensive repairs were carried out about the church at this time; for William Egerden, the plumber, actually received 25*l.* 11s. 6d. "for ledyng of the south ile"; 40s. was paid for boards bought at Kingston; 60s. 8d. was paid for the outer work of the two windows of the vestry, the glazing of which cost 9s. 7d. more; a new door for it cost 11s., and a pair of hinges 23d. Also, "for thirteen borthens of Roshes for the new Ile," 18d., and "for careying of fourteen lodes of erthe from the Wolstaple to the Chyrche," 12d.

"For mendyng and dressyng of a grete boke," 4s. was paid; 8 lb. of tallow candles cost 8d.; twenty-four burthens of rushes at Easter cost 3s.; William Royall was paid 8d. "for two days in mendyng of pewes"; also 10d. "to Hewgh, Keper of the Paloyes [Palace] for a

new ladder"; mending eighteen vestments cost 2s. 2d., while there was spent upon Master Harry Abyngton, who was a worthy benefactor to the parish, 6d. "for a brekfast" upon one occasion, as also 4½d. for wine for him "at dyvers times." Added to which there was always a payment at the end of the account of 20s. "for brede, ale, wyne, and kychen, for a soper to the awditors and to the new wardens," at which, without doubt, our Westminster friends talked over parochial affairs with the same spirit as they do to-day.

By the foregoing entries we have illustrated the times of William Caxton throughout the fourteen years in which he worked his printing-press at Westminster. Our extracts from the books have not been exhaustive, but Mr. Noble has made them as illustrative of the period as possible. At the same time, we must not forget that the years we have quoted are not the only early accounts possessed by the parish of St. Margaret. The earliest is dated 1460-1462, and comprises nine parchment leaves 10 in. by 6½ in. in size. The earliest "Guild" account is 1475-1478, in twenty leaves 11 in. by 8 in., and in it is the receipt of 20s. for three years' rent of the tenement inhabited by the Vicar of Kensington, and 7s. 6d. for three years' rent for 2½ acres of land in St. James's-fields, which is now covered by those princely blocks of buildings lying between Pall-mall and Piccadilly!

Although we do not intend to go deeply into the other accounts, there are one or two items interesting enough to quote. Thus in 1494:—"Reseved of the wyffe of the Katrine Whele [Catherine Wheel] and of the wyffe of the Dragon for a Pew," 3s.; and these appeared to be the ladies of the taverns of those names. "For mendyng of y^e^ gret Pulpitt," 3d. "For naylis and makyng of a bedde in the vestrie for the clerkys," 6d. This was probably a bedstead, and is explained by an entry among the church goods in 1498:—"Item, a fether bede w^t^ a bolster of the gefte of the Syster of the bysshop of Seynt Asse [Asaph] to thentent that he shall remayne into the vestrie as long as they last for the clerkis of the cherche to lay upon"!

In 1496:—"For 20 tonne and 5 fote of Cane Stone, price the tonne, 6s."; and "to 6 laborers

havyng up of the same stone at the myll and to 4 laborers for ye helpyng home therof fro the myll to the cherchyard, 3s. 4d."

In 1498:—"For a chayne of yron to bynd the boke at Mast Habyndon's pewe," 8d. "Of a man of London for a stone that was founde w^tin the grounde that a man was buried in," 6s. 1d. "Paid at a taverne for a Potell of Wyn for Sir William Tyler when we spake to him for to have license to have our Reigate stoon," 4d. In 1500:—"Rec^d a ryng of sylver and gylte of an olde woman." "Payd for fetchyng of 2 tonne of stone over the water from Fakkes halle into the Kynges brydge," 6d. The stone itself cost 4s. a ton. In 1502:—"For 2 foder lede bought at Bertylmewe feyre," 8*l*. "For makyng of 8 dragons," 6s.8d. "For changing of £5 of noughty pence," 3s. 4d.,—and this, we presume, was money received at the collections, &c., which was either bad or under weight. In 1504:—"To fader Yanne for the kepyng of the whype for betyng the dogges oute of the chyrche," 16d. The same year, on St. Margaret's-day:—"To the waitts of London for to go afore the pcession," 4s. In 1510:—Received "atte burying of the costerdmonger for 4 tapers," 4d. This is an early mention of the word "costermonger," which is brought very close to our present definition in the accounts for the feast in 1519:—"To the costerdmonger for Peirs, 12d."! And as we travel over the interesting entries year by year, we find the cherished names of our early printers,—of Wynkyn de Worde, of Pynson, Copland, Berthelet, Julian Notary, and others, who all helped to produce, after Caxton's death, those wonderfully-printed sheets and books which, at this day, are looked at by all of us with such loving eyes.

We have mentioned the guild already, and endeavoured to show its design. Of its powers as a society we see an evidence in its accounts for 1519-1522, and an extract we cannot do better than submit to the attention of the rulers of benefit clubs of to-day: "Receyved of Robert Graunte for misbehavyng hym in words spekyng at a q^rter-day kept in the cheker chamber on Seint Thomas Day in Cristmas in the presence of all the masters and brethren then beying, Master Walter Gardener, John Wryght, and John Ford, wardeyns, the whiche wordys wer

spokyn to William Millys and Edward Stokwod, then churche-wardeyns of Seint Margret, and ther he was juggyd by all the houss to pay a pound of wax, and so he payd ther 10d." And the same time Thomas Wylde was fined to the same amount for having entered into a law-suit with another brother, Philip Lentall, without having first submitted his case to the fraternity! It is such entries as these that help to enlighten us about the customs of our forefathers. Such decisions among themselves in these old guilds frequently saved the members from the gentlemen of the long robe, an endless law-suit, and loss of money and ruin of home.

The Church of St. Margaret, Westminster, situated as it is beneath the shade of the Abbey and the Parliament Houses, boasting, as it does, of a history which goes far back into the age of tradition, is a building well worth a pilgrimage to see. Recently restored at an expense of 12,000*l.*, which amount, thanks to the energy of its rector, the Rev. Canon Farrar, has just been paid off, it is now one of the finest, as it is one of the lightest, of our London church interiors, and what is of even more consequence, it is one of the few London churches which often has a congregation larger than it will comfortably hold. But somehow or other it has always been a popular edifice, while the parish has been the home of some of the most celebrated of England's worthies from the days of Caxton to our own. Its registers, as we have stated, commence in 1538, twenty years earlier than the majority of parish registers, and yet in those twenty years something like 12,000 names are written in its books, while in the first 100 years we are rather under the estimate than over when we state the number of entries in its books to be 60,000, of which 34,000 are burials. This will give good evidence of the size of the parish even in those early times.

The three names recorded in the parish books which stand most prominently forward in history are Caxton, Raleigh, and Milton. Other famous names occur in the registers, but these are the illustrious ones. At the top of the page of the Burial Register for October, 1618, is written, "Sir Walter Rawleigh, knight," and this is all the evidence we have of his burial in this church after he was beheaded in Old Palace-yard. Curiously

enough, the register, during this month, is without the actual dates; but as the entry is only the fourth from the end of that month, the day of his burial must have been, as historians state,—the 29th. Among the Birch MSS. in the British Museum is a copy of the letter which Queen Anne is supposed to have written to the king's favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, in these words:—"Anna R. My kind dogge,—If I have any power or credit with you, I pray you to let me have a triall of it at this time in dealing sincerely and earnestly with the King that S^r^ Walter Raleigh's life may not be called in question. If you do it so that success answer my expectations, assure yourself that I will take it extraordinery kindly att your hand, and rest one that wisheth you well and desire you to continue still as you have been, a true servant to your master." But although every effort was made to save Raleigh, it was useless. At the time of the recent restoration an effort was made to trace his remains, but that, too, failed; and although there is a tablet to his memory in the church, it has been suggested there should be, and Canon Farrar still hopes to succeed in getting for the great west window, a suitable stained glass memorial. As the text on the tablet tells us,—"Reader, should you reflect on his errors, remember his many virtues, and that he was a mortal,"—a mortal, too, bear in mind, to whom the world at large owes something.

John Milton, "the prince of poets," and Oliver Cromwell's secretary, who was then a resident in Petty France, in St. Margaret's parish, was married to his second wife, Katherine, the daughter of Capt. Woodcock, of Hackney, by Alderman Dethick, probably in the Guildhall, London, the 12th of November, 1656. We are indebted to the researches of Col. Chester for this valuable information (see Prof. Masson's "Life of Milton") and to the registers of St. Margaret's for the fact that there the banns were published October 22nd and 27th, and November 3rd. On October 19th, 1657, the Baptism Register records the name of "Katherine Milton," the issue of that union. But poor Milton's second marriage was of short duration. His wife was buried here on February 10th, 1657-8, and the infant child on March 20th following, thus bringing, as Professor Masson

remarks, darkness once again over the life and labours of this celebrated man. Of what those labours were, at Westminster at least, Professor Masson himself is the best story-teller.

To give even an outline of all the noticeable entries to be found in the registers would take up too much room, and tire the patience of our readers; but there are a few curious ones which may interest us all, and give us an insight to the style our forefathers had in registration. Turning, therefore, to the list of burials, we find these items :—1554, May 9, "Jone Wylson the heretyck was buryed without ye churchyearde." July 7, "A poore man dyed at ye Mynster doore." August 10, "Jone a pore Woman died at Westminster Hall doore." 1567, Oct. 10, "Jane a pore Woman w^ch^ died in ye theving house." 1578, June 26, "My ladie Chickin a poore woman so called." The first entry in the second volume of the register somewhat puzzled us. The burial of "Roberte Noble" is recorded on the 24th and 25th of May, 1572, and to prevent any mistake, the clerk has bracketed the dates. Why should Robert Noble's burial take two days? After puzzling ourselves for some time we arrived at the conclusion that as it is the first entry in the book, and as many of the subsequent entries of a later date had evidently been written in at the same time, the new book had not arrived when these burials took place, and the clerk who had kept notes in his pocket found the date of the earliest one to be somewhat indistinct, and the happy thought struck him to put down the two days, one of which he knew was correct, but it did not much matter which. The careless system of posting parish registers three hundred years ago easily accounts for the remarkable entry, — 1618, January, "John Agodsname." But when we came to the year 1649 we began to think it was time to stop, for on October 11th stands the entry of the burial of "Cardinall Wolsey"! Subsequent inquiry showed him to have been a child baptised the 15th of June previously as the son of Robert Wolsey, by Abigail his wife! After all, what's in a name?

Among the baptisms we find on October 25, 1598, "Nelleodillior Billy, daughter to Hugh," and on December 3, "John, base son to a pudding man." Even a couple of hundred years later the

clerk had a curious way of entering, for on October 3, 1782, is this entry, "A boy with 2 Xtian names, sneaked off." It seems the child was baptised, but the parents went off without paying the fees, and so the clerk had his revenge. On August 11, 1657, were baptised "Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah Joanes SS. and D. to Edward by Alice borne att one birth in the long Woolstaple. The mother dyed in child-bed." Upon referring to the burials, the mother's name is entered that day, and on the 16th of September the child Sarah, but no record of the burial of the three boys. If we only knew they survived to man's estate the fact would be doubly interesting.

One marriage, so far as curious names are concerned, is worth a note, and it occurs June 7, 1626, "Richard Lambe to Barbara Puddinge." The connexion is certainly suggestive. And yet these names are eclipsed by more modern ones to be found in the registers of the Church of St. Dunstan-in-the-West, such as "Lock Key," in 1685; "Marey Whit-Sunday," in 1697; "Thomas Shipyard," in 1698; "Elizabeth Chancery Lane," in 1705; "Remarkable Bunworth," in 1712, and "Politicall Smith," the same year. In 1673, however, there is a still more curious entry of burial, "September 28, What-you-please Hill buried under the Quest House out of Chancery Lane." After this, what more need be said? We do not give our children such odd names nowadays, but for the privilege of telling our readers some of the peculiarities attending the registrations of centuries ago we owe our gratitude to William Caxton, in whose honour, and to perpetuate whose fame, this memorial is offered to our readers.

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